

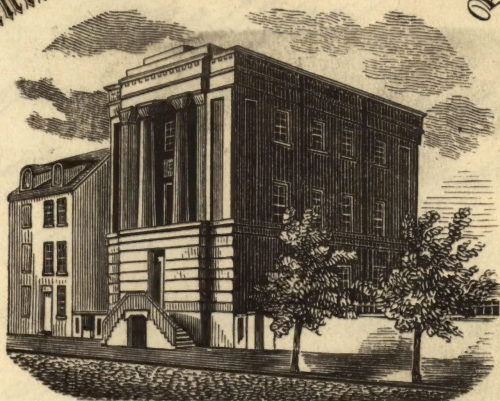


THESIS

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

of the

Homoeopathic Medical College of Pennsylvania,



FOR

The Degree of Doctor of Medicine

BY

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Variola,

or

Smallpox.

The origin of this disease is entangled in somewhat of a mystery, different opinions prevailing as to the time and place of its first appearance.

The error of early writers, in dating its existence to a period which they could not substantiate, has given the present generation less light upon the subject and veiled it in still deeper

darkness. It is supposed to have been introduced into Europe, early in the middle ages, from Asia, in sections of which, it has prevailed from time immemorial; but we have no positive proof in regard to the matter and whether the ancients were acquainted with the disease, in any of its forms, will ever remain a point of argument.

It has now lost much of its former importance; and is looked upon with less fear since the discovery of vaccination, which, has proved itself, (by quelling the ravage of this disease) to be one of the greatest discoveries known in medical science.

By Vaccination, we understand the act of communicating the disease by the introduction of the vaccine virus into the skin; the word is derived from, Vacca, cow; a disease having appeared in that animal termed cowpox, capable of being transferred to man and in a great measure securing him against smallpox; this fact, no doubt, was recognised some time ago and was resorted to, in a measure, in different parts of the globe, as India, Persia and South America; it was on account of experiments made by Dr. Jenner, when inoculating for smallpox in Gloucestershire, England, that

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we owe the promulgation of this
property of the vaccine virus,
which is not now as formerly
taken from the cow, experience
having clearly shown that it is
nearly as powerful when obtained
from the human vesicle. In some
instances Smallpox occurs after
vaccination, but it is so modified,
that it is termed Varioloid, yet
in fact it is only Smallpox
divested of its terrors and happens
less frequently after vaccination
than inoculation. ~~the contrary~~
Vaccination is now practised
in nearly all parts of the
world, while inoculation,
once thought a happy dis-
covery, is rarely if ever prac-

used and is considered a barbarity, for, although it modifies the disease, it renders the person inoculated, liable to spread, the contagion thus artificially produced and makes him the centre of a contagious influence.

Though inoculation produces a mild form of Smallpox, it sometimes proves fatal, which adds another serious objection to its practice.

Vaccination on the contrary, is not contagious and the individual vaccinated, moves in society the same as previous to the operation.

For how long a time this may

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prevent smallpox is not fully known, the effects varying in different individuals; the shortest period is about five years, but to have the greatest security, revaccination is occasionally necessary.

The cause of smallpox is contagion, it attacks all ages and classes, alike, that are not protected by vaccination; we frequently meet with persons who have mingled with it from time to time and not been affected, but still such cannot consider themselves safe, an attack often coming on in old age, which is very

likely to prove fatal.

The time, at which the disease is contagious, is supposed to commence about the seventh day and continue, as long as scabs remain upon the body; one attack in the generality of cases, protects the system against a second, but sometimes, a person is attacked a second time and we have cases on record, in which the same person was attacked the third time.

Variola, or Smallpox, is a contagious, eruptive disease, which is recognised, by a fever of three

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or four days duration, after which
the eruption makes its appearance,
passing through three different
and distinct stages; first, pimple,
then vesicle and then pustule,
which is said to arrive at
maturity in eight or nine
days, but almost every case
seems to be governed by laws
of its own, in regard to the
time, especially in a strumous
diathesis, when we sometimes
find it much over the time,
before the pock is fully formed,
one case in particular, that I
attended, was fifteen days after
the eruption first made its
appearance before the pustule
was fully formed, it remained,

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stationary without any change
whatever for five days, desiccation
then commenced and went on
rapidly, it was thirty-one days
before the scabs disappeared
from the body and then they
had just commenced leaving
the face; the patient was a young
lady aged eighteen and of a
decidedly scrofulous habit.

We generally recognise two
varieties of this disease, the
discreet or distinct, when the
pustules on the face are well
defined, or isolated, as it were,
and do not run into one another,
but still so close together, some-
times, that we cannot place the
point of a pin between them,

the fever in this variety is inflammatory throughout, which ceases when the eruption is fully complete:

And the confluent, when the pustules are more or less united, forming a complete mask over the face, in this variety we have a fever of a typhoid character.

All cases of regular smallpox have three stages, first, the introductory, or eruptive fever, second, the progress, or maturation of the eruption, third, the decline.

The first stage of distinct smallpox, commences with a sense of chilliness over the whole body

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lasting from half an hour to two
or three hours; after this has
passed off we have a hot skin,
flushed face, frequent pulse,
yellowish, ~~fevered~~ tongue, thirst
for cold drinks, nausea and vom-
iting is sometimes, but not always
present in this stage, cephalalgia,
pain in the back about the lumbar
region, with general weakness,
as if from a heavy cold, sore
throat and sometimes delirium;
in children we often have convul-
sions, wakefulness and great
restlessness and difficult
respiration; this state of affairs
generally continues for three or
four days, when the eruption
makes its appearance and the

patient will often say he feels better. The eruption at first, is so slight that it can hardly be observed, this soon turns to bright red specks; they first make their appearance on the face, then on the neck and arms and at last upon the lower extremities.

Sometimes the eruption appears over the whole body at once, the prognosis, in such cases, is very unfavourable.

This stage of smallpox offers no symptoms by which it can be distinguished, for a certainty, from other eruptive fevers, unless the disease was prevalent at the time, but still when we have the agonizing lumbar pains and

the intolerable sickness of the stomach, with all due respect to these two leading symptoms, we would be called upon to think of smallpox.

The second stage, may be considered as commencing when the eruption is fully out, the small, bright red specks of the first stage, now become decidedly papular and about the second day, lymph may be seen at the apex of each one of these little pimples; in about two more days the pocks are well formed, we find now a slight depression in the centre of each, at the base the skin becomes red and inflamed, they continue increasing

in size, the third change taking place of vesicle to pustule, this is called the maturation period; they now contain pus, (sometimes we find them quite transparent and watery in appearance) after a while the depression in the centre disappears and they become quite round on the top; in the change of the vesicle to the pustule there is always more or less swelling of the skin, more upon the face however, than any other part, the feet and hands, are also swollen very much; at this time we have a horrible stench sent forth from the patient's body, I cannot say what this odor is like, in fact, it is unlike any-

thing I know of, but it can easily be recognised by one familiar with the disease, it generally lingers about the patient three or four days. About the eleventh or twelfth day the third stage sets in, in which the pustules commence drying up, this is called the period of desiccation, which goes rapidly on, commencing on the face first; the swelling of the face now subsides and the dry scabs commence falling off about the fourteenth day, but the eruption on the extremities is not yet fully out, so that four or five days later we have the scabs formed on the hands and feet, the fever is now on the mend, the appetite returns

and by the time the scabs have all fallen off, health is restored.

Confluent smallpox. This is the same disease, but in a more aggravated form; it is known by the pustules running together, forming one continuous whole, the face being the part from which we form our diagnosis. The symptoms are all aggravated, to an alarming extent, the eruptive fever is more violent, the lumbar pains are more intense, the convulsions, delirium, stupor and sickness of the stomach, are all, heightened to an alarming degree; in this state, death may take place before the eruption makes

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its appearance, which generally
comes on, about a day sooner than
in the distinct variety; it is
always found thickest on the
face, in some cases it is so bad,
that not a portion of the healthy
skin can be seen; in this variety
the pocks do not rise up so nicely,
as in the distinct, but are generally
quite flat and have the appear-
ance, some thing, as if a bladder
was stretched over the face with
water under it, there is more
eruption internally in this
variety, the mouth and throat
are often lined, I have seen a
dozen, or more, on the tongue;
the swelling of the skin is
much greater, more particularly

the face ^{and} scalp, so bad is it that the eyes are closed, the nose enlarged to twice its natural size, the cheeks puffed out and the lips enormously swollen; all this with the horrible odor that is passing off from the patient, makes it one of the most disgusting sights that we could be called upon to witness.

About the eighth or ninth day the fever, which has never left the patient, sets in with renewed vigor and if he is of a strong constitution he may recover, but on the contrary, if he has been in bad health before the attack the debilitating effects of it would be very likely to bring

on all the symptoms of the low form of typhus, in which state death is very apt to close the scene; But if he passes through this stage, to that of desiccation, he is still in very great danger, but should this not prove fatal, convalescence at length comes on slowly and the scabs commence falling off.

We have another variety of small-pox, denominated malignant, in consequence of its very poisonous nature; it is also termed

Black Small-pox, from the extravasation of blood; this variety is always accompanied with great danger.

For the treatment of Smallpox we have the following remedies—

Acon., Cham., Bella., Spec., Tart., Bryo., Rhus. Tox. Puls. Stram. Sulph. Mercu. Arsen., Hepar S., and others; it is needless for me to mention the indications for these separately, as they are quite familiar to all; but in regard to two that I have not specified, (*Variolinum* and *Taccinines*), I desire to call more especial attention. In the minds of many of our very best Homoeopathic physicians, these two remedies are regarded as worthless, but, if I might be allowed to state my experience respecting them, I should say, that I have witnessed the most advantageous

results from their use, and have watched their effects in eight cases, in which I administered them and found the recovery more speedy and not a mark or pit visible; while in seven cases that did not take these remedies, recovery was slow and the patient miserably marked. My plan has been, to give on the seventh day of the eruption, three powders of Variolinum and three of Vaccinine of the second preparation, a powder every two hours, after which, I generally prescribe Mercu. V., which assists the process of desiccation; I think this method worthy of more special attention by the Homoeopathic,

Profession and feel confident
that it will, if practised, prove
more conclusively, (if possible),
the efficacy of the invaluable
law *Similia similibus curantur*.